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Amendments to the claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims

Claim 1 (previously presented):

A method for producing a flexible and low density cross-linking gel for connecting optical fibers having a refractive index, said method comprising: adjusting the refractive index of a flexible silicone gel material to be that generally equal to the refractive index of said optical fibers to be connected, and a reaction step for causing the flexible silicone gel material adjusted in said adjusting step by cross-linking said silicone gel material to an extent such that a gel having a low degree of cross-linking is produced for closely adhering to optical fibers; and wherein said adjusting step and said reaction step are carried out in a clean room.

Claims 2-6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (currently amended):

7. A method for producing a low cross-linking density gel used for connecting and for adhering to optical fibers, said method comprising adjusting the refractive index of a flexible silicone gel material to that of said optical fibers to be connected, synthesizing a composition by adding a cross-linking agent to said adjustable flexible silicone gel material; filing a

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syringe with said composition; sealing said syringe; and heating said sealed syringe to cause said composition to undergo an addition reaction [in a binding region where cross-linking density is low,] thereby producing a low cross-linking density gel in said syringe allowing close adherence to said optical fibers.

Claims 8-9 (previously presented)

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the syringe is sealed by mounting a cap in the sealing step.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein the syringe is mounted in a dispenser for dispensing a predetermined amount of the low cross-linking-density gel by replacing the cap mounted on the syringe by a nozzle after the low cross-linking-density gel is produced in the syringe.

Claims 10-16 (withdrawn)